

**"JUSTIFICATION OF CULTURAL VALUES OF THE IGBO CLANS  
IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART"**

Submitted by  
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## 1. Abstract

In any social set-up, cultural values are considered the core of their own tradition that is inherited from the ancestral roots. Where the conflict of the same begins, it is after the interference of aliens or colonizers that corrupt and destroy the values. This project is going to discuss the justification of the cultural values of the Igbo Clans of Nigeria through the novel Things Fall Apart (TFA) by Chinua Achebe. In the first, we will present a brief glimpse into the life of the author and his novel. Then we highlight the run-through nature of Igbo society at that time. By explaining, for instance, Igbo festivals, the worship of their gods, and other social behaviors. It particularly deals with clansmen's adherence to their rituals and culture. In addition, it describes the position of clans against white men when the missionaries make a call for a new religion and culture among the Nigerian clans.

**Key words:** culture, social, life, society, novel.

### -التمهيد :

في أي تكوين اجتماعي، تعتبر القيم الثقافية جوهر تقاليدهم الموروثة من جذور الأجداد. وحيث يبدأ صراع الشيء نفسه، فإن تدخل الأجنبي أو المستعمرين هو الذي يفسد القيم ويدمرها. سيناقتش هذا المشروع تيرير القيم الثقافية لعشائر الايجبو في نيجيريا من خلال رواية أشياء تتداعى (TFA) من تأليف تشينوا أتشيببي. في الأول، سوف نقدم لمحة موجزة عن حياة المؤلف وروايته. ثم نسلط الضوء على الطبيعة السريعة لمجتمع الايجبو في ذلك الوقت. من خلال شرح، على سبيل المثال، مهرجانات الايجبو، وعبادة الهتهم، والسلوكيات الاجتماعية الأخرى. يتعامل بشكل خاص مع تمسك رجال العشائر بطقوسهم وثقافتهم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يصف موقف العشائر ضد الرجال البيض عندما يدعو المبشرون إلى دين وثقافة جديدة بين العشائر النيجيرية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الثقافة، الاجتماعية، الحياة، المجتمع، الرواية.

## Chapter One

### 1.0 Introduction

Many tribes have unique rituals in any country. A socially connected group's customs, philosophies, and social interactions are called culture. Cultures often divide by geography. Language, art, social mores, religion, music, and diet are cultural traits. World civilizations are diverse. Cultures have been passed down since the beginning. Similar cultures can unite people and build communities. Culturally similar people share interests, values, and morals. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

A cultural community's traits are passed down via generations. Culture stands the test of time. Knowledge, practices, language scripts, dress rules, etc., are examples of local culture. We appreciate culture since it shapes our evolution and identity. Our culture illuminates our predecessors' morals and life's significance. Additionally, it distinguishes us from other nations. As children, we learn about our local culture by growing up in it, and society shapes us. Traditional communal culture bonds us eternally.

Cultural heritage fosters community and belonging. We connect with our ancestors through customs and culture. Our culture's core principles improve our lives. All cultural practices, from religion to weddings, should be recognized. Regional culture is being preserved despite changing times and blended cultures being trendy. We will promote Nigerian culture, particularly Igbo culture. (Gill, N. S. (2019).

Many Nigerian clans were created in Nigeria. Examples include southeast Igbo, northern Hausa, and southwest Yoruba. In addition, the Igbo people pronounce (Ibo, Eboe, Iboe, Heebo). An elected leader rules an ethnic community. The Igbo have a stratified society with social statuses. An Igbo clan speaks Igbo, a Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo language. Their five cultural divisions are Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern, and Northeastern. Before European rule over Nigerian tribes, the Igbo lived in different local groups. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

At the start of the mid-20th century, Igbos grew interested in ethnic identity and aspired to promote their culture. Most Igbo live in rainforests and depend on agriculture. Many people have Igbo staple crops. Many yams, cassava, and taro are grown. But yams are vital to the livelihood. Thus, they affect how people live, rich or poor, strong or weak, in power or not. The Yam is important to Igbo. Yam harvest festivals are held. A diet staple. Thus, they feel that a guy who owns a lot of yams can feed his family, demonstrating masculinity and prosperity. This makes him strong. Igbo culture balances life with yams. As part of Igbo culture, men must bring Yams to show they can support their wives. On Igboland, males grow yams while women harvest and care for other crops. Dispersed compound communities house Igbo people. The compound, called Obi, is usually huts representing a home. The father of a large family lives in his own obi, apart from his wife's hut and children. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

European explorers called Igboland the Ibo or ibow nation. After decades of intense opposition from all sides, the British Empire conquered Igboland. The Ekumeku is a famous resistance movement. In 1883, the Igbo army fought the British Empire's Royal Niger Company. They resisted British empire for 31 years. The Royal Niger enterprise (RNC), a trading enterprise, gave Igbo and other communities economic and political influence, sparking the revolt. When foreign influence and heavy taxes began to affect Western Igbo towns, they rebelled and decided to free themselves. Igbos sought to control Igboland independently. They started the Ekumeku movement secretly. This goal united them. He also wanted to show the world that Africans are proud of their old civilization and culture Things Fall Apart. Civilization, morals, and ethics, while Fall Apart indicates disintegration from an external force that devastated their life and internal factors like disease and poverty. Colonization erased African civilization's identity, territory, and history after thousands of years. People followed tradition, conventions, and policies to live like their forefathers in the novel.

The work raised two crucial issues. Igbo customs and traditions. They love their culture, and most people follow it. For instance, the clan judges a man's goodness or weakness based on his behavior, family care, and tribe-protecting or helping role. An Igbo man acquires dignified titles and a spectacular reputation by working hard, not by inheritance. The novel's protagonist, Okonkwo, received two titles, including famous wrestler and warrior, while his father, Unoka, received nothing. Missionaries and their summons to the new faith dominate the novel's second half. Nigerians know missionary white men. British colonialism began there. British rule over Nigeria began in 1851. They founded colonies in 1914. Nigerians endured persecution, slavery, and other sufferings during these years. In 1999, Africa gained independence. (Barry, O. M. 2019).

### 1.1 Author Biography

Chinua Achebe, (British Nigeria). His full name is Albert Chinualumogu Achebe, (1930-2013) Boston, Massachusetts, U.S. Nigerian poet, novelist, critic and professor at Brown University and critic. He is considered the central figure in contemporary African writings. His parents were Christian, so he was raised in Christianity, in Ogidi village in Igboland, eastern Nigeria. Although he had his early schooling in England, he grew up amid a complex fusion of postcolonial Christianity and Igbo traditional culture. Achebe attended the University of Ibadan to study medicine and literature. Ibadan was founded in 1948 at University College Ibadan. He was hired by the the Nigerian Broadcasting Company in Lagos after receiving his degree and also worked at the British Broadcasting Corporation Staff School in London. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

Achebe changed during his career and throughout his writings. He has been at the core of a recent literary movement in Nigeria since the 1950s that draws inspiration from the indigenous tribes of Nigeria. Achebe wanted to use Igbo words and stories even though he wrote in English. He was also regarded by many as one of the most inventive writers of English literature who ever lived. His novel *Things Fall Apart* in 1958, the most popular work of modern African literature, helped him gain fame. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

The late 19th century European conquest of southern Nigeria and pre-colonial lives are both depicted in *Things Fall Apart*. Published in 1960, is an account about a Nigerian man who struggles with his Igbo culture and Western lifestyle while studying in Britain. The third novel was published in 1964 and is titled *Arrow of God*. The main character of the book is Ezeulu, an Igbo village priest in colonial Nigeria in the 1920s, who fought against Christian missionaries and colonial authorities additionally in the 1966 film *A Man of the people*. *Home and Exile*, a semi-autobiographical compendium of Achebe's thoughts on living outside of Nigeria, was released in 2000. During his life, he wrote a lot of short stories, poems, essays, and articles. They covered the intricate details of the Nigerian Civil War, social and political problems, colonialism; and the post-colonial legacy. (Gill, N. S. (2019).

He received appreciation for portraying social and psychological confusion brought on by the Western mores and values imposed on conventional African civilizations without sentiment. He was particularly worried about the danger to developing Africa. His novels range from an African village's first contact with whites to attempts by educated Africans to establish a strong moral order from the shifting values of a large city. What is remarkable about Nigerian literature is that most novelists work during the day in addition to writing, which shows that they have mental and physical energy. Although Achebe lived for a long time away from his homeland, that did not prevent him from writing about his nation's people and the content of his culture. He passed away on March 21, 2013. He left behind many wonderful works in which he expressed the problem of Nigeria and its traditions and the disasters that befell them and left a strong impact on his audiences. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

Achebe holds more than thirty honorary degrees from universities such as Brown University, Harvard University as well as Dartmouth College, in South Africa, Canada, Nigeria, the United State and the United Kingdom. In addition, he received the first Commonwealth Poetry Prize 1972, the Order of the Federal Republic 1979, the Nigerian National Order of Merit Award in 1982 and an Honorary Fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Also, he won many awards for instance, in 2010, Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize, the MN Booker International Prize (2007), the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (2002), Louis Literary Award (1999). He was chosen to serve as a Goodwill Envoy for the United Nations Population Fund in 1999. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

## 1.2 Exposition on the Background of the Novel

*Things Fall Apart*, the debut novel by Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe, came out in 1958. A literary classic in Nigeria, it is widely regarded as such. Set in late 19th-century southeastern Nigeria, the book depicts life before European colonization and the expansion of the British Empire. As one of the earliest novels to garner international praise, it is often regarded as the prototypical modern African English novel. Not only is it read and studied extensively in English-speaking countries worldwide, but it is also a classroom staple in Africa. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

Written in 1958 as a melancholy piece, the novel takes place in 1890. For example, the Polish writer Joseph Conrad distorted the African man's identity in his book *Heart of Darkness* by describing the African population in a negative and savage way; Achebe wrote this story in response to other racist Western writers who portrayed Africans as barbarians who required enlightenment from Europe. Joyce Cary's 1939 novel *Mister Johnson* also dealt with a Nigerian servant to a British man, describing him as a clown and a complete moron. Achebe composed this book to reflect the Nigerians' identity because their works had troubled him. Achebe gives the reader a balanced picture of his people's history by describing events like Igbo festivals, ceremonies, and the worship of gods as well as other social practices, such as their rich culture and other social practices. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

Moreover, he wanted to convey the idea to the world that the African people have an ancient civilization and culture that they are proud of. *Things Fall Apart*, things that mean civilization, values, and ethics, while *Fall Apart* means disintegration because of an external force that destroyed their lives as well as internal factors such as disease and poverty. African civilization has been known for thousands of years, but colonialism obliterated its identity and took over its lands and history as well. The novel is about a history of tradition, customs, and policy that were followed by people to live life like their ancestors did. The novel argued two important topics Firstly, the customs and traditions of the Igbo people. They are very pleased with their culture, and most of the population adheres to these customs. For instance, the clan evaluates a man if he is good or weak according to his behavior, care for the family, as well as the role that he played to protect or help his tribe. An Igbo man earns honorific titles and a stellar reputation through his own efforts, not through the legacy of his family. Okonkwo, the main character in the novel, got two appellations, like the great wrestler and warrior, while his father, Unoka, got nothing. The second part of the novel is about the missionaries and their calling to the new religion. The Nigerian people knew the white men in the missionary movement. That was the first step of British colonialism. In 1851, the British Empire took control of Nigeria. They established their colonies in 1914. During these years. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

### 1.3 The language of the Novel

Achebe delves deeply into his own society, revealing its complexity. Through it, people of all cultural backgrounds, including his own, can have a better understanding of the rich history and complex culture of Africa. Writing in English allows him to reach more people and has a greater impact on literature than if he had written in a language like Igbo. At some point, authors who write in their native tongue will have to allow translations of their works, most often into English, so that readers outside of the culture can understand it. The usage of English, however, gets Achebe into problems. What is he going to do when he tries to describe African culture and history using a vocabulary that does it no justice? The fundamental goal of *Things Fall Apart* is to tackle this colonial-era cultural miscommunication between the Igbo and their own culture. In the book, the Igbo people wonder how a white man who doesn't speak Igbo can condemn their traditions. The only way for a non-Igbo speaker to comprehend Igbo culture is to learn the language and terms. Achebe addresses this problem by incorporating elements of the Igbo language into his work. By weaving together an English story about his culture with Igbo words, rhythms, language, and ideas, Achebe makes a substantial contribution to the bridging of cultural boundaries. Most Igbo terms may usually be understood by looking at their context, as the Igbo vocabulary is integrated into the text quite well. What kind of reader would read *Things Fall Apart* without being familiar with the concepts and words chi, Also, ogbanje, and obi (1)? Achebe allows the non-Igbo reader to connect with and understand this complex Igbo culture by incorporating the nearly untranslatable Igbo vocabulary (such as chi and ogbanje) into his story. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

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(1)

\*Chi: Personal god.

\*egwugwu: A Masked embodies one of the spirits of the ancestors of the village.

\*ogbanje: a child dies repeatedly, returns to his mother's womb, and reborn.

\*Obi: family head hut.

## Chapter Two

### 2.0 A Review of the Theoretical Literature

Many works are written about the Igbo culture, and how the author wanted to reach the African's traditions to the whole world, as well as how colonialism changed their thoughts and culture. In 2013, a topic was published about (*Things Fall Apart: An Analysis of Pre- and Post-Colonial Igbo Society*). Another topic was (*Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre*) in 2015. (*Socio-Cultural Commitment in Things Fall Apart*) was published in 2008. (*Things Fall Apart*), copyright, Anchor Books a Division of Random House. African study review of Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in 1993. Missionary Acts, *Things Fall Apart: Modeling Mission in Acts 17:15-34* and a Concern for Dialogue in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. A report from Guardian Nigeria Channel on YouTube. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).



## Chapter Three

### 3.0 Methodology and Procedures

#### 3.1. Research design and methodology

The goal of this study was accomplished through the use of analytical and descriptive approaches. This study makes use of the novel *Things Fall Apart*. This research used descriptive and qualitative techniques to examine *Things Fall Apart*, a book by Chinua Achebe. A postcolonial perspective and attentive reading were tools of the researcher's trade. By employing the close reading strategy, one could gain insight into how Chinua Achebe scribed the indigenous ideals of bygone eras and the horrific encounter between Europe and Africa using the colonizer's tool. The goal of the research was to find out how authors may use the post-colonial perspective to examine the mingling of colonized and colonizer cultures in their works. Another purpose of the motif was to examine the hegemony displayed by the British colonizers and the interactions between the two civilizations. Some Igbo clansmen rebelled, while others quietly conformed to the new faith, sacrificing their nativity, as the study sought to analyze the devastation and humiliation of the Igbo clan's nativism. By reinvestigating the past and painting a realistic picture of indigenous Africa, the study also aimed to re-inscribe and recreate culture through Achebe's use of re-education and regeneration strategies, which were uncovered through the application of the exploratory design technique. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

#### 3.2. Procedures of the Study

- 1- Reading the biography of Chinua Achebe and some of his works.
- 2- Referring to some of the other literary works that were the reason for making Achebe writes this novel.
- 3- Giving description and analysis of the Igbo's culture.
- 4- Giving justification of practice of Igbo traditions.
- 5- Discussing the colonizer's view of ethical and cultural identity of Igbo people.

#### 3.3. The culture and tradition of Igbo clans

##### A. Religion

Religion is sensitive for many people. Most people choose a faith that fits their beliefs and thoughts. Despite popular misconception, religion is not a personal choice that can be adjusted to a person's feelings and beliefs. Religion is dedicated to unchanging, unadaptable, unbending beliefs. Despite personal belief, religion is inflexible and unchangeable. People who strive to adapt religion to meet their beliefs face great resistance. Their religion clearly defines right and wrong. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

See Igbo religion in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Show Igbo religion's role. Community religion has emerged. Umuofia believes that everyone influences the spirits' decisions, and one person's actions can affect many. Igbo believe in nature gods and goddesses. Infuriating the sun deity may unleash days of rain and ruin crops. You shouldn't upset the harvest goddess since she may wither the crop on the stalk. If Okonkwo angers the Earth Goddess and crops suffer, every farmer's season is ruined. The belief that one man's actions affect everyone makes it impossible for people to follow their faith separately. As long as their actions could hurt others, they should be held accountable. The Igbo people revere the goddess of the earth and take great pains to avoid angering her for fear that her fury would wipe out generations. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

Many tribes traveled far to consult Umuofia's ground god, Agbala, the oracle. They arrived when they faced difficulties or disputed with neighbors. Many came to ask their parents' spirits questions or learn their destiny. The sharing entrance was a hole in a hillside, somewhat larger than a henhouse's round entrance. Worshippers and guests who inquired about the god crawled through the hole on their bellies to find Agbala in pitch-black. Nobody had seen Agbala save his priestess. His priestess was the only Agbala believer. No one ever entered his terrifying refuge, and his power faded without him. His priestess announced the god's will by the sacred fire she kindled in the cave. After Okonkwo was chastised and sent away for accidentally killing a boy, "Men from Ezedu's neighborhood invaded his property in large groups dressed for battle" in chapter thirteen. They destroyed his barn, killed his animals, burned his homes, and demolished his red walls... Some of them, like Obierika, were Okonkwo's closest friends and "had no hatred in their hearts against Okonkwo," but they saw it as "justice of the earth goddess, and they were merely her messengers. "These individuals are tired of Okonkwo's hurtful conduct. So, they exile and burn his possessions to eliminate him. They think one finger can soil others with oil. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

##### B. Rituals

The main character in *Things Fall Apart* is Okonkwo. His hometown of Umuofia is where he trains as a warrior and wrestler. It happened in the very last decades of the nineteenth century. Despite his violent attitude, Okonkwo is powerful and successful due to his three wives and children, Yam stock, and his legendary reputation earned from wrestling victories. He strives mightily throughout the novel to be the antithesis of his father, Unoka, whom he saw as feeble, inebriated, and indebted, since he has been terrified of being weak and because he believes femininity is evil since he was a little boy. Irritated and preoccupied with his masculinity, he acts out frequently as a result of this. The Umuofia men were a vehicle through which Achebe showed how important it is to honor one's heritage and continue ancestral rituals. Okonkwo should have had the guts to kill Ikemefuna, a kid who had become his surrogate son after being given to Umuofia as a ransom by another village to end a blood feud. Ikemefuna is sentenced to death by the clan elders after a three-year period. "The boy calls you father," warning Okonkwo an elderly man named Ogbuefi Ezeudu of this Umuofia area. Never have anything to do with Ikemefuna's demise. Section 7. Priest of the Hill and Caves made the announcement that it was decided to kill. For Okonkwo, it was especially difficult because he considered Ikemefuna a "boy" (Nwoye). In Nwoye, he felt his influence. On the other hand, he needs to slaughter the boy in accordance with his clan's traditions. Following Ikemefuna's death, Okonkwo felt exhausted and deprived of food for two days. It is impossible that mercy felt anything at all. That is not a strong stance for a woman to take. Too much emphasis on conventional wisdom was exerted by Okonkwo. (Barry, O. M. 2019).

Things Fall Apart is a description of the Igbo twins as seen by society, and Achebe does it by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the Igbo culture and traditions as they relate to Western civilization. Concerning the murder of identical twins, for instance, their views Obierika's wife gave birth to identical twins, but the earth goddess decreed that they "were an outrage on the soil and must be exterminated" in the terrifying Evil Forest, a symbol of all things dark and terrifying, including death. A symbol of both power and death, the Evil Forest is more than just a guy wearing a mask. I am Evil Forest, I am Dry-meat that fills the tongue, and I am Fire that burns without sticks," Evil Forest says to bolster his impression even further. For some reason, they think that twins, being supernatural beings, could have a more difficult time developing normally in a mother's womb. The only way to ensure that the family and the village were protected from further harm was to dispose of it. As a result, the entire Igboland would be subject to the great goddess's wrath if the clan failed to impose retribution for transgressions against her. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

As an additional point, Things Full Apart makes numerous references to the Evil Forest; for example, Unoka, the unfortunate protagonist of Okonkwo's father's story, was among those. Without a proper funeral, his bad chi, his personal deity, followed him to his grave. The swelling is what ultimately proved fatal for him; it was something the earth goddess found repulsive. Nobody could let a man die at home if he had edoema in his limbs and stomach. He was abducted and abandoned to die in the Evil Forest. Reportedly, a stubborn guy became so disoriented that he had to be hoisted back to his house before being led to a forest and bound to a tree. The victim's disease could not be concealed in her bowels since it brought shame to the ground. Same to Unoka, he died and rotted away above ground since he was not given a proper burial. They forcefully removed him, but he kept his flute. He had a thorough understanding of his tribe's regalia. The only way out of this wilderness was death, since he would never be able to return to his homeland. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

### **C. Male and Female**

Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart" showed Igbo ideals. Gender was a major issue in the story, which was about cultural encounter and struggle between the Igbo people of Africa and European whites, among other ideals. The story prominently depicted gender roles, which should be analyzed. Masculinity and femininity were so prominent that particular tasks, farm crops, and social crimes were still gendered. Yam tubers, firewood splitting, and agricultural cultivation were designated for men because they took more energy. Achebe's portraits of women have garnered attention because to their considered undignified roles in traditional Igbo society. In Obi, women don't sit or eat with their husbands. They must create the husband's favorite food and present it to him. The boys sit and eat with their father, like Nwoye and Ikemefuna did as adults, and they attend their father's Obi and hear of their ancestors' conflicts. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

In Igboland, a man must meet one of three social status standards to obtain respect. That is by having multiple wives, growing numerous Yams, or defeating the village's strongest man in wrestling. Okonkwo ruled his household strictly. His three wives feared his rage. When Okonkwo gathered his neighbors to drink palm-wine, he was the first to taste it. After men drank, so ladies could drink, the first woman started, and the other wives had to wait. First wife had more rights than second or third in anything. The first wife can wear her husband's title anklet. (Barry, O. M. 2019).

In Igbo culture, if a wife makes a mistake, her husband will brutally beat her to prevent it. If a husband doesn't discipline his wife, his other wives will follow. So, he must stop this awful behavior. The novel has Okonkwo beating his third and second wife twice. Ojugo, Okonkwo's third wife, was physically abused for disobeying a traditional Igbo woman's duty to cook. Although it was the sacred Week of Peace, she couldn't return in time to make the afternoon dinner after plaiting her hair at her friend's house. However, he beats his second wife, Ekwefi, for cutting banana leaves to wrap meals. Only pleading for the week of peace, the other women did not oppose him. When Ekwefi, his third wife, lamented "guns that never shot", he nearly shot her to death. Okonkwo rages nervously. He beats them as punishment and as a crude display of his rage, machismo, and male supremacy. He appeared to have a superiority complex that prevented him from solving domestic concerns. He frequently intimidates. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

### **D. The Week of Peace**

The Igbo clan was one of the clans that tended to violence and war, yet they celebrated Week of Peace. The week of peace, which falls between the end of harvest and the start of planting, is a significant celebration because it is a time of calm during which the tribe asks the earth goddess for her blessing on the crop of the next year. It is a yearly religious celebration during which no one harms or abuses one another. There should be full harmony amongst all parties. Of course, the week of Peace has more meaning than just being a religious observance. This is done to thank the earth goddess in hopes that she will bless the crops and the hamlet with a healthy harvest. The significance is provided by the negative behavior of the main character, Okonkwo. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

During the week of peace, Okonkwo looks forward to Ojiugo, his youngest wife, bringing him food. He investigates the reason she was absent when he had anticipated her arrival. He finds out that she went to a neighbor's cottage to get her hair plaited and hasn't come back yet. While she was away, Nwoye's mom fed and cared for her children. Not only that, she failed to even make lunch for her children or Okonkwo. To try to defuse the issue, Nwoye's mom played down Ojiugo's recklessness. It was a fact that Okonkwo knew. Returning to his Obi, he patiently awaited Ojiugo's arrival. Upon her return, he brutally assaulted her. In his fury, he had completely disregarded the fact that it was the week of peace. Hurriedly leaving in a state of extreme terror, his first two wives pleaded with him to leave because it was holy week. Still, not even reverence for a god could stop Okonkwo from slapping someone in the middle of a fight.

Okonkwo is instructed to rectify the situation. Going to the Ani Shrine the next day, he had to bring a hen, a goat, some clothes, and one hundred cowries. The priest's suggestion was heeded by Okonkwo. A container of palm wine was further transported by him. Okonkwo felt shame on the inside. But he wasn't the sort to go around convincing his neighbors he was wrong. Because of this, he was said to have disdained the clan's deities. His detractors claimed he had become narcissistic as a

result of his success. Obviously, given it has been quite some time since anyone in Umuofia has broken the sacred week, everyone is free to speak only about religious matters for the rest of the week. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

Therefore, by breaking the week of peace, Okonkwo had offended the earth goddess by violating the week of peace, and she might not grant them a healthy harvest as a result, endangering the entire clan. During the week of peace, nothing was accomplished. People visited their neighbors while sipping palm wine. They just discussed Okonkwo's nso-ani crime this year, nothing else. A person had disturbed the sacred stillness for the first time in a long time. Only one or two such instances of someone disturbing the peace could be recalled, even by the oldest men. The villagers take great pride in The Week of Peace demonstrating that the Igbo people do not lack dignity in what they do. We also find out that the Igbo clan is not just bad, violent or mindless because they dedicated an entire week to being peaceful in everything. Nobody is permitted to utter a single nasty word. There should be full harmony amongst all parties. This is done to please the earth goddess, who will then bless the crops and provide a prosperous harvest for the community. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

Things Fall Apart is Achebe's account of the Igbo people's history, and he does it by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the Igbo way of life, which set it apart from Western ways of life. To them, killing or sacrificing is a way to achieve religious harmony. He proves to Okonkwo that he is brave and merciless; killing Ikemefuna was not in his character. The legal systems of the Igbo people are founded on the traditional wisdom passed down through generations. The elder men of the community preside over the courts, and the villagers put their faith in the knowledge and insight of these men, as well as the divine intervention of their ancestors, to ensure that the judges render impartial and fair decisions. They lived their lives according to the Igbo tales. Also, according to the beliefs and traditions of the community, everyone's destiny is determined by how the villagers treat each other, the soil, and their ancestors. In accordance with their cultural norms, the Igbo people were steadfast. One of the reasons for its success was Achebe's thorough portrayal of Igbo culture. (Barry, O. M. 2019).

#### **E. New Yams Festival:**

Chinua Achebe brings attention to the significance of yams in Igbo culture in Things Fall Apart (TFA). Because of their importance in the Igbo diet, yams play a significant role in the harvests of the Igbo people. A man's wealth and status are measured by the quantity of yams he can produce. "The king's crop" is a simple way of describing yams. In the final days of the year, the villagers celebrate the arrival of the new yams. As a sacred crop, the yam is an important part of the Igbo diet, and its celebration is a way to honor Ani, deity of the land. Emphasis is placed on its manhood and its importance in Umuofia community. Once a year, during the Week of Peace, the clan plants and harvests yams. On the other hand, throughout the planting season and the Feast of the New Yam, Okonkwo's temperament and behavior change according to the occasion. For example, Okonkwo's third wife Ekwefi is the victim of an incident of violence that occurs during the Feast of the New Yam because Okonkwo gets irritated with the celebrations and the lack of work. While Okonkwo scolds Ikemefuna and Nwoye for botching the planting of the seed yams, he finds that this is his favorite time of year to work because he is able to put in endless hours. It is a mark of success and prosperity if a man can support his family solely from yams, and yam cultivation is a male-dominated occupation. (Gill, N. S. (2019).

Okonkwo was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He did not inherit a barn or title. He was ashamed of his father's biography and death because he was poor and lazy. Despite his difficult circumstances, he began to plan for a prosperous future. He asked Nwakibie, a wealthy, older man who has three huge barns, nine wives, and thirty children, for help by lending him some of the yams. Nwakibie gave him twice four hundred Yams. He began planting and harvesting. As a result of his hard work and effort, Okonkwo succeeded. He rose from poverty and misfortune to become one of the masters of the clan. Okonkwo knew the value of Yam well. He became wealthy due to Yams, and as such, Okonkwo scolded his son, Nwoye, for cutting the Yam into a large size. The Yams are a portion of an important food source and must be preserved. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

The ceremony of the Feast on New Yams was described by Achebe. An annual celebration honoring the goddess of the land, the Feast of New Yam takes place at harvest time. Since the New Yam Festival heralded the beginning of harvest season, it was eagerly awaited by men and women of all ages. The huts and walls were made to sparkle in the light by the women who had scrubbed them with crimson dirt the night before the festival. Designs in shades of white, dark green, and yellow adorned their surfaces. Beautiful black patterns began to appear on their backs and bellies as they began painting themselves with camwood. Not only that, the children were decked out as well, with their hair styled in the most exquisite patterns. Furthermore, they were ecstatic about a relative's invitation, and the children were thrilled at the prospect of being pampered by these foreign visitors from back home. The remaining Yam from the previous year were all eradicated. Instead of last year's wrinkled, mouldy harvest, this year's new year should start with fresh, excellent yams. The yam-pounding wooden mortar, along with all the other wooden bowls, calabashes, and cooking implements, had been thoroughly rinsed. During the ceremony, the primary meals offered were yam foo-foo and vegetable soup. No matter how much the family ate or how many people they brought from a neighboring hamlet to celebrate with them, there was always a substantial quantity of food leftover because there was so much food prepared. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

Observing New Yam is a way for the Igbo people to show their gratitude to Ani, the fertility goddess. Throughout their lives, she was pivotal. In addition to communicating with the deceased fathers of the Umuofia people, she served as the ultimate arbiter of matters of conduct and ethics. In yearly celebration of the Earth goddess Ani and the clan's ancestor spirit, the Feast of New Yam is held. Umuofia is filled with joy as the festival approaches. During this yearly festival, the Igbo people expressed their gratitude to God by demonstrating their respect for him. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).



## Chapter Four

### 4.0 Discussion, Results and Findings

#### 4.1. The missionaries

*Things Fall Apart* (TFA) is a book (1958). Before white missionaries arrived in their country, a little fictional town named Umuofia, located on the fringes of Nigeria, served as the location for the story. Chinua Achebe mirrored the culture, lifestyle, and rituals of Igboians. They lived their life, and practiced what they believed without the interference of people outside of their religion. They believed that the earth god would keep the devil at bay. Before the arrival of the white men, the Igbo community was religiously, socially, and culturally cohesive. The Igbo people in Umuofia are unsure of how to respond to the rapid cultural changes that the missionaries threaten to bring about with their new governmental structure and institutions. This is because white missionaries unexpectedly arrived in Umuofia.

#### 4.2. Cultural and Ideological Conditional Achebe's Novel

Achebe's main motivation for authoring the book was to inform his readers on the importance of African culture. *Things Fall Apart* gives viewers a glimpse into Igbo civilization just before white missionaries invaded their territory. Almost every aspect of Igbo society is at risk of alteration as a result of the colonizing force's invasion, including religion, traditional gender roles and relationships, family structure, and trade. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

During the years of exile of Okonkwo in the motherland, Mabanta, missionaries appeared in the neighboring villages and finally arrived in Mabanta, calling for a new religion, Christianity. The men of Mabanta did not fight them. But the white men asked for a plot of land to build their church. The elder man, Uchendu, consulted with the tribemen, and they decided to give them a portion of the Evil Forest to build their shrine. They will meet their fate in the Evil Forest. Let the gods of the earth take over and die within a few days. The missionaries began to build the church. The influence of white men seemed to increase, and many people converted to Christianity. The days passed and nothing bad happened to the white men, so they took their time and built a new house of red mud and straw for their instructor, Mr. Kiaga. He called all the villagers to worship the true God. It was well known among the tribemen of Mbanta that their gods and ancestors were sometimes long-suffering and would deliberately allow a man to go on defying them. But even in such cases, they set their limit at seven weeks or twenty-eight days. Nobody was allowed to proceed past that point. The villagers were so certain about the doom that awaited these men; however, they were still alive. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

#### 4.3. Culture Change and Collision of Igbo Society

Many indigenous peoples gave up their homes, family, and way of life to become Christians because they found Christianity so appealing. Extreme superstition and faith in the many gods traditionally maintained by the indigenous people began to wane as the new religion spread over the populace. As the indigenous people flocked to the new Christian faith, many family bonds were severed. Prior to European colonization, the Igbo family unit was paramount. Though it was unusual for a father to part with his son, Nwoye, Okonkwo's son, many families were forced to do so when the English came and promoted a new religion. This included wives and daughters as well as children. Instead of enduring his father's abuse and brutality, he sought solace in the new religion. He joined the Christian faith. Being a part of the white man's religion brought him great joy. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

#### 4.4. Psychological Disintegration of Identity and Social Unraveling

It was a long time to be apart from one's clan. It wasn't always easy for men to find a spot to wait. After his departure. Someone else got up and put something in it. All of this was known to Okonkwo. He was well aware that the nine masked spirits that presided over the clan's court system no longer favored him. He could have spearheaded his violent clan's resistance to the new faith, but he had passed up that chance. Returning to Okonkwo's own land was not quite as exciting as he had anticipated. It appeared as though Umuofia was unfazed by the warrior's return. The clan changed so drastically while he was away that it was almost unrecognizable. Everything from the new movement to religion to trading stores was in the minds and eyes of the people. No one said anything about Okonkwo's return. Returning at that time was not appropriate. Okonkwo was visibly distressed. A personal loss wasn't the only thing that happened. As he saw the clan fall apart, he too shed tears for the warrior men of Umuofia, who had suddenly become surprisingly pliable, like a woman. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

During his banishment, white missionaries arrive in Umuofia, the hamlet is transformed. Okonkwo observes Umuofia's significant changes after returning to his village during his banishment. Okonkwo and the other villagers band together to expel the white missionaries from their territory because they are unhappy with the change. As the missionaries send their messengers to call off the meeting, their attempts are in vain. In awe over Okonkwo's conduct, the villagers let the other messengers to flee after he murders one of the messengers. Once the missionaries receive the messengers' reports, they depart to bring Okonkwo to court only to discover that he has already passed away. The man was tired of the recent events in his village and the change that happened to the people of the village. He left a strong village that clings to its rituals and customs. But he returned to find his village disintegrated. As a result, he could not stand and committed suicide. (Barry, O. M. 2019).

#### 4.5. Cultural and Religious impacts upon the Igbo people

Declining to deny the missionaries land grants from the Mbanta kings was the Igbo people's worst sin. The Igbo seemed like a simple people that the missionaries could easily convert with their culture. Everyone in Umuofia submits to the white missionaries' authority. The Igbo people hate the white missionaries and think they are from another planet because they don't know their origins. To this day, they still don't understand the Christian core beliefs. The reason behind this is that, until recently, white people's culture and nature have existed independently of their language. Having never encountered it before, the Igbo are at a loss as to how to respond to this new religion, which leads to the demise of their civilization. Despite the Igboians' lack of interest in or request for white missionaries' assistance, the latter find themselves compelled to civilize them

due to their belief that the former are inherently barbaric. When it comes to the problems that the Igbo people have been experiencing, they think they have finally found the answer. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

#### **4.6. The Cultural and Religion Impacts of the Colonizer upon Igbo's**

Colonialism has far-reaching and multifaceted effects on Igbo culture. Everything about the English way of life and society was shaped by their beliefs. No matter how the old systems and beliefs were manifested in religion, family life, children, or the deceased, they were superseded by the systematic views and way of life of the white people. Upon their arrival in Umuofia, the white missionaries demand unwavering submission from the natives. Conversely, missionaries provide a ray of hope to individuals whom the Igbo religion scorns. For example, the mutilation of dead newborns, the sacrifice of boys, and the slaughter of twins are all common and tolerated practices in Igbo society. In an effort to eradicate the practices that bring them persecution, some Umuofia have banded together to adopt the religion of the white man. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

Supporting the white men's proposition is the only way out of their own faith, thus many peasants are eager to do it. One of the earliest Christians was Nwoye, son of Okonkwo. After the death of sixteen-year-old Ikemefuna, who was practically Nwoye's brother, this decision was made. In response to Igbo's plan to have his brother killed, Nwoye decided to join the church and go to school to become a priest or educated person. Christian conversion is something that Nwoye's father strongly disapproves of. In spite of his displeasure with his son's choice, Okonkwo decides to keep quiet about it. Since Okonkwo considered Nwoye "weak and woman-like" from the start, it follows that he must have known his son would behave in such a way. (Awojobi, P. O. 2001).

There was great anger in the village, Ajofia, the leader of egwugwu of Umuofia, the masked spirit, told Mr. Smith, the priest, that he should go back home and leave them alone. They destroyed his church. They should no longer allow it in their midst. It has bred untold abominations, and they have come to put an end to it. The white man did not understand their customs just as they did not understand his. They described the white man as foolish because he did not know their ways or lifestyle. While Mr. Smith stood his ground, he could not protect his shrine. Okonkwo had spoken violently to his clansmen in the marketplace to decide to fight the white men. After three days of the destruction of the church, the District Commissioner invited six men, including Okonkwo. They were restrained and escorted to the guardroom in handcuffs. In prison, the head messenger treated them with contempt and humiliation. During this period, they did not eat, drink, or go out to urinate. The fine was paid by the leaders, but the bitterness in Okonkwo's heart was still. He decided on vengeance. If Umuofia decided on the war, all would be well. But, if they opted to be cowards, he would go out and get revenge himself. However, his clan failed him and did not stand by him after killing the messenger. So that he was determined to leave them forever. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

#### **4.7. Individual as Portrayed in Okonkwo**

A key character in the novel, Okonkwo, offers multiple views on the nature of manhood and African identity, which together illustrate the many shades of identity. As the Christian conquerors approach the small town, he fears for his people's survival and the future of their African identity. The arrival of the English poses a challenge to the pre-existing culture of the hamlet since they bring with them a new language, religion, and administration. Locals like Okonkwo fought against the changes at first, but they finally adjusted to them because they threatened the things that make them uniquely African. The white man is brilliant, the text says. With his religion, he arrived in a quiet and unobtrusive manner. We allowed him to remain because we found his foolishness entertaining. He has won over our brothers, and now we can't even manage to be a clan. Because he severed the bonds that bound us, we have fractured. Okayonkwo is depicted in *Things Fall Apart* as a courageous and dogged man whose major flaws eventually catch up with him. Growing up, Okonkwo wanted nothing more than to mimic his father's personality. As a result of this major flaw, Okonkwo is banished from the village and finds it difficult to adapt to the changes happening around him. The community and its surrounding areas took notice of Okonkwo since he was widely believed to be a law-abiding citizen. He achieved his success as a result of his personal efforts. (Gallo, L. N. 2019).

#### **4.8. The Rigidity of Colonialists and their Imperialistic Intentions**

*Things Fall Apart* depicts the collapse, anarchy, and confusion of Igbo culture, which was harmed by the arrival of white people and their religion in Umuofia. White males and Igbo people have vastly different perspectives on life. To white missionaries, certain behaviors that are considered acceptable in Igbo culture are not. They sought to alter certain aspects of Igbo culture that they deemed unsuitable and improper. They did not realize that these aspects of Igbo culture were what had kept the Igbo people united and able to coexist peacefully. In the Igbo culture, for instance, it was believed that a "genuine" man would have two or more wives. In some cultures, a man's offspring belong to his wife and her family because the globe is so big. This quotation demonstrates that the clan's female members have accepted this practice as well. In some cases, the first wife may even request that her husband take a younger bride. The older wives must be respected by the younger wives. The women cohabit harmoniously with their husband and assist one another in child care and domestic tasks. The white missionaries are against polygamous marriages since the New Testament forbids it for Christians. *Things Fall Apart* contains a lot of text that explains Igbo myths and proverbs that are offensive to Europeans. Achebe deftly exploits the characters by inserting proverbs into dialogue. Igbo believe that using proverbs in discourse demonstrates wisdom and respect. (Benjamin Ofori Yeboah 1993).

Because of their perceived primitivism, the European missionaries felt compelled to help the Igbo. Since the white missionaries and the Igbo had never encountered one other's culture before, they must have seen this as a chance to share cultural ideas, even though establishing their dominance over the indigenous was the primary objective of the white missionaries in Umuofia. Due to their lack of curiosity about the world beyond Umuofia, the Igbo people may have profited more from the cultural exchange, as the author demonstrates. If white missionaries had never set foot on their land, they would

never have learned that other civilizations existed. The white missionaries' arrogance toward the Igbo led to the conversion of some Igbo Christians to become missionary messengers. White folks thought the Igbo were a drag since they had to take care of them and educate them on things, they didn't know anything about. The white men's belief in the inherent moral superiority of their culture led to tensions between the Igbo and the white people of Nigeria. Despite appearances to the contrary, these difficulties persist and contribute to tensions between the two cultures. It is critical to comprehend the pros and cons of European colonization as it pertained to Igbo culture. Because to the community's schools and educational opportunities, the illiteracy rate in the village was reduced, which had a profoundly good effect on Igbo society. As a result of this progress, most Igboians have gotten degrees, learned more, and become more enlightened. In spite of the fact that the Igbo had a hard time adjusting to the ways of the outsiders, they learned a lot about the Europeans' culture and picked up some new concepts from them. (Maatla, Lame, 2013).

## Chapter Five

### 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Conclusion

The Igbo culture is deeply ingrained in Chinua Achebe's book "Things Fall Apart." Examine this culture's history, religion, way of life in terms of family and farming, as well as how the Igbo people interpret the Evil Forest. Achebe's main motivation for authoring the book was to inform his readers on the importance of African culture. Things Fall Apart gives viewers a glimpse into Igbo civilization just before white missionaries invaded their territory. Almost every aspect of Igbo society is at risk of alteration as a result of the colonizing force's invasion, including religion, traditional gender roles and relationships, family structure, and trade. Therefore, Achebe attributes the repressed post-colonial Igbo culture which may be understood in terms of the oppressed social coherence between the individual and their society—to the colonial authority and/or invasion of white missionaries. Achebe also thoroughly enlightens readers on the myths and proverbs of Igbo society.

Consider your society and any religion you may practice. What customs do you follow? Are there any customary rituals or events that you can recall frequently witnessing? What about nuptials or memorial services? These and other similar factors all contribute to a society's culture. Chinua Achebe covers Igbo culture, which includes polytheistic religion, father-son inheritance, farming customs, and a belief in bad spirits, in Things Fall Apart, which is set in Nigeria in the early 1900s. Every important event has a meaning based on the Igbo culture and any necessary facts about it. Every important event has a meaning based on the Igbo culture and any necessary facts about it.

As a whole, Achebe concentrates on the Igbo culture and ritual as they are shown in the things fall apart, both before and after European missionaries arrive in Umuofia. These influences on the Igbo culture ultimately result in a collision of civilizations between the two groups. However, the literature depicts the colonized as confused about their sense of identity rather than as victims of colonialism. Most colonized people are unsure about whether to adhere to their own culture or that of the colonizer. As a result, they mix up some aspects of the two separate cultures, which causes them to alternate between their present and previous selves and contributes to their muddled sense of identity. In most cases, this back-and-forth movement results in a miscommunication that may be significant.

In his work Things Falling Apart, Chinua Achebe depicts the Igbo culture and the pre-colonial African society in the 1800s. This book is based on the tale of the figure Okonkwo and how the morals of Nigerian society were reflected in his deeds. Achebe used the persona of Obierika to illustrate how rationality was rarely accepted by society and how those in positions of authority always made the decisions. When contrasting Okonkwo to his best buddy Obierika, the author portrayed an Igbo society marked by irrationality, narrow-mindedness, and a refusal to adapt. This demonstrates how humans never pay attention to the voice of reason and always give importance to those who hold a particular status in the society. The colonial era had a dual impact on Igbo culture, both halting it and enhancing it. With its representation of Igbo society, TFA therefore casts doubt on European novels that portray Africans as barbaric and examines the repercussions of European colonization on Igbo society from an African perspective.

Finally, it cannot be said that the decline of Okonkwo and Igbo culture was only caused by their deeply ingrained cultural history and robust belief system. Things Fall Apart seeks to examine both the flaws and the virtues of Igbo culture by analyzing the socio-cultural commitments that are shown in the book. In addition to focusing on Achebe's role as a committed writer who is writing from an empire to refute the ignorant and prejudiced claims made about Africans and the black continent by some uninformed European Philosophers, the study also explores the theme of the clash of cultures, the cultural practices, and the unity of the Igbo people before and during the obnoxious colonial rule. The novel's representation of Igbo society serves as a metaphor for African nations struggling with issues related to sociocultural progress and cultural clash. Before the coming of the colonial masters, the African people in the story lived in peace, harmony, and organization; it was their arrival that caused their community's chaos and disarray.

## 5.2 Recommendations

In the light of the result of the content analysis of the Igbo's traditions and culture values of the Igbo clans in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. The researcher presents the following recommendations:

- 1- There is a need for future studies to the positive and negative interaction between the whites and Igbo people.
- 2- More focus need to the reasons behind the missionary.
- 3- Need to shed light on African works that discussed the intervention of the West in their countries.
- 4- More focus needs to analyze the Igbos style and social practice.
- 5- Concern for Dialogue model and language in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.

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